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IN THE SPECIFICATION:

Please amend the paragraph spanning line 17 on page 7-line 3 on page 8, as follows:

FIGURE 2 is a functional block diagram showing the software modules 30 of the antivirus system 21 of FIGURE 1. The antivirus system 21 includes two functionally separate modules: SMTP receiver 31 and antivirus scanner 32. The SMTP receiver 31 intercepts and screens transient message packets, preferably exchanged in compliance with the SMTP protocol, such as described in W.R. Stevens, "TCP/IP Illustrated, Vol. 1, The Protocols," Ch. 28, Addison Wesley Longman, Inc. (1994), the disclosure of which is incorporated by reference. The fields in each message packet header are screened for indications that the accompanying contents of the message contain a virus, malware or other form of bad content, such as described in commonly-assigned related U.S. Patent application Serial No. []10/016,509, entitled "System And Method For Providing Dynamic Screening Of Transient Messages In A Distributed Computing Environment," filed December 10, 2001, pending, the disclosure of which is incorporated by reference. For example, a subject field in a header containing the string "Check this out" would signal an infected message when intercepted by the SMTP receiver 31 along with other similar messages confirmed to be infected. Only screened "clean" messages 38 are forwarded on the antivirus scanner 32.

Please amend the paragraph spanning lines 10-21 on page 8, as follows:

The antivirus scanner 32 operates in an event-based manner by processing screened messages fed into the message queue 37 by the SMTP receiver 31. The message queue 37 functions as an event-handler by creating a logical connection between the SMTP receiver 31 and antivirus scanner 32. The message queue 37 provides an intermediate store in which screened messages 38 are staged. In the described embodiment, the screened messages 38 are efficiently staged in a hierarchical message store implementing a portable message referencing scheme, such as described in

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commonly-assigned related U.S. Patent [application Serial No. _____]No. 6,745,192, entitled "System And Method For Providing A Multi-Tiered Hierarchical Transient Message Store Accessed Using Multiply Hashed Unique Filenames," filed December 10, 2001, the disclosure of which is incorporated by reference.